

a bar of rich chestnut near the tip of all the feathers of the flanks; thighs cinnamon-brown; bill and legs blackish brown.

Total length,  $9\frac{1}{2}$  inches; bill, 1; wing,  $5\frac{1}{8}$ ; tail, 4; tarsi,  $1\frac{3}{4}$ .

Female similarly coloured.

The young, at about a month old, have acquired much of the colouring of the adults, but the centre feathers of the back and shoulders are darker, with lighter edges, giving this part of the plumage a very sparkling appearance.

#### NUMENIUS RUFESCENS, Gould.

Head, neck, upper and under surface reddish fawn-colour, deepest and most conspicuous on the rump and tail-feathers; down the centre of each of the feathers is a streak of blackish brown, broadest and most conspicuous on the back, rump, and upper tail-coverts; primaries blackish brown, strongly toothed on their inner margins with greyish white; tail-feathers irregularly crossed with blackish brown; thighs light buff.

Total length, 23 inches; bill, 7; wing,  $12\frac{1}{2}$ ; tail,  $3\frac{3}{4}$ ; tarsi, 5.

This is a very fine species, about the size of *Numenius arcuatus* and *N. australis*, from the former of which it differs in the absence of the white rump, and from the latter in its rufous colouring.

#### 10. ON A BIRD SUPPOSED TO BE THE FEMALE OF CROSSOPTILON AURITUM, PALLAS, FROM NORTHERN CHINA. BY ROBERT SWINHOE, F.Z.S., H.M. CONSUL AT FORMOSA.

My friend Dr. Lamprey, of the 97th Regiment, stationed at Tsin-tsin, sent me, while I was at Amoy, the bird I now exhibit, in skin, with the statement that he had seen several of the same species, all of which were similar in plumage. My specimen I have taken to the British Museum, and compared, with the kind assistance of Mr. G. R. Gray, with Hodgson's bird from the Himalayas. That they are closely allied species there can be no gainsaying; but of their distinctness there can be little doubt. Our bird is much larger, has longer tarsi, bill higher at the base, white throat, with longer ear-feathers, deep brown plumage, and a differently shaped tail. From the development of its cheek-skin, its form of bill, as well as the appearance of its plumage, it bears the mark of an old bird; and from the shape of its tail one would infer that it was a male. But, on examining its legs, we find no spur, only a hard callosity, such as distinguish the females of the *Phasianidæ*. I am rather inclined, therefore, to concur with Mr. G. R. Gray in considering the bird a female, but the masculine form of tail is rather a difficulty. In comparing it with the specimen of *Crossoptilon* in the Museum, it is, however, easy to see that the tail of the Peking bird is proportionately smaller, and, judging from analogy, it is rather improbable that the mature male would wear such a dingy livery. Now, supposing this bird to be a female, we have no hesitation in saying that it is not the female of the *Crossoptilon* from Thibet; we must, therefore, compare it

with the description of the *C. auritum* given by Pallas in his 'Zoographia Rosso-Asiatica,' vol. ii. p. 86. Pallas makes no mention of proportions and measurements, and, further, he tells us that the only skin he received from China had no legs; but the shape of the tail, with its eighteen side-feathers and four curved central feathers, answers very nearly, as well as the white throat and ear-plumes, the latter  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch long. But in general colour, and in many respects, they differ. Pallas's bird has the black plumelets on the crown bluish black; throat and ears white; the neck, the whole body as far as the rump, together with the bases of the wings, of one uniform bluish leaden; interior quills same colour as the back; primaries brown, the second, third, and fourth being margined exteriorly with white; tail with the four central tail-feathers curved and comose, of a bluish black; the four nearest *rectrices* on each side widest and entire, curved inwards, and nearly equal in length, blue at their extremities, the rest of the side-feathers decreasing gradually in length, the greater part of their basal halves being white, the apical portions bluish black.

Ours, from Peking, has the small plumes on the crown *purplish* black, bordered by an indistinct whitish occipital band. Throat and ears white. Neck deep shining black. Back, belly, and entire wings deep chocolate-brown; vent silky and paler. Rump and tail dingy white, the stems of the tail-feathers deep chocolate-brown, the ends of the tail-feathers being more or less deeply tipped with purplish black, the four central feathers being comose, and the nine others on each side being almost equally graduate and curved inwards.

Now the objections I take against considering this bird the female of *C. auritum*, Pall., arise first from its style of colouring. The male of *C. auritum* has the entire body a bluish leaden. In our bird, consequently, if a female of the same species, we might expect to find a uniform brown. But no; ours has a *black* neck and a *white* rump. The white margins to the quills might be a sexual difference; but it strikes me, from Pallas's description, ours has much smaller and somewhat differently shaped wings. In the tail, too, we should expect greater similarity of colouring, if not of form. In the colouring of its tail *C. auritum* more nearly approaches the *C. tibetanum*, Hodgs. The four central feathers are bluish black; the four next on each side, of *nearly equal* length, are tipped with blue; whereas the entire tail of our bird is dingy white, tipped with purplish black, the four feathers next to the central ones being graduated in much the same proportion as those that follow. I think, therefore, after due deliberation, that our bird, which there seem to be valid reasons for considering a female, is a species the male of which will be more beautiful than either the *C. tibetanum* or the *C. auritum*. If I am rightly informed, our specimen hails from Manchuria, whereas Pallas's bird came from Mongolia, and Hodgson's from Thibet. For the present, therefore, I appropriate to myself the advantage of the doubt, and propose to introduce this as the female of a new species, which I propose to name *Crossoptilon mantchuricum*.